

ABC NIGHTLINE
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ANNOUNCER: This is ABC News Nightline. Reporting from Washington, Ted Koppel.

KOPPEL: It is perhaps the ultimate 'what if.' What if the power of the human mind could be harnessed to track what cannot be seen or to discover what cannot be found by conventional means? What if it became possible to communicate mind-to-mind, regardless of distance and without employing any technology? And perhaps the most disconcerting 'what if' of all, what if the U.S. government dismissed all talk of parapsychology as nonsense, while the Soviet Union made a legitimate breakthrough in the field? It is that last 'what if,' according to three recent books, that has caused the Pentagon and the CIA to ever so discretely look into the subject. Here's Nightline correspondent James Walker.

WALKER: The arms race, the superpowers match missile for missile, tank for tank, plane for plane and now brain for brain. That's right. Some military observers and scientists believe that the United States and the Soviet Union are engaged in a psychic arms race, that both sides are training psychics to use their minds to conduct espionage and sabotage. How would it work? This 1952 memo from the CIA explains one military application. 'If a number of individuals could be found in the U.S. who have a very high ESP, extrasensory perception capacity, these talented individuals could be assigned to intelligence problems. Such a problem as whether or not the (word deleted) had a submarine pen at a given port or area could be attack by ESP.' ESP is part of the controversial field called parapsychology and includes such alleged abilities as telepathy--reading someone's mind, remote viewing--seeing things out of normal range of sight, precognition--predicting the future, and psychokinesis--moving objects with your mind. But many American scientists are highly skeptical. Dr. Paul Kurtz heads the Committee for Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal. DR. PAUL KURTZ (Skeptic): Are psychics able to discover where the submarines are? Can psychics use psychokinesis and stop incoming missiles or damage sensitive, ah, weaponry? That's all, at this point, pure speculation and pure fantasy.

WALKER: In 1960, one such fantasy alarmed the Soviets. This article in a French magazine claimed that the crew members of the U.S. nuclear submarine Nautilus had received telepathic messages from America as the sub cruised under the North Pole. The Soviets read the article. MARTIN EBON (Soviet Specialist): This material was picked up by Professor *Leonid Vaselea in Leningrad, who translated it, had it distributed among his colleagues and said, in effect, 'Look what these Americans are doing.'

WALKER: Martin Ebon, who is a Soviet specialist, says the article was a hoax, perhaps planted to fool the Soviets. It did spark their interest. Soviet scientists were allowed to study the strange powers of *Nina Kologana, who

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